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**(54) REPOSITIONABLE ARTICLES HAVING A MICROSTRUCTURED SURFACE, KITS FOR
PRODUCING SAME, AND METHODS OF USE**

WIEDERVERWENDBARER ARTIKEL MIT EINER MIKROSTRUKTURIERTEN OBERFLÄCHE, KITS
ZU IHRER HERSTELLUNG UND VERFAHREN ZU IHRER VERWENDUNG

ARTICLES REPOSITIONNABLES COMPORTANT UNE SURFACE MICROSTRUCTUREE,
NECESSAIRES POUR LES PRODUIRE, ET PROCEDES D'UTILISATION

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• **RATNAM, Diwakaran, A.**
Saint Paul, MN 55133-3427 (US)

(30) Priority: **24.05.1994 US 248863**

(74) Representative: **Warcoin, Jacques et al**
Cabinet Régimbeau
20, rue de Chazelles
75847 Paris cedex 17 (FR)

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(73) Proprietor: **MINNESOTA MINING AND
MANUFACTURING COMPANY**
St. Paul, Minnesota 55133-3427 (US)

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GB-A- 1 458 918 **GB-A- 2 265 441**
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(72) Inventors:
• **REEVES, Mark, E.**
Saint Paul, MN 55133-3427 (US)

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Description

Background of the Invention

1. Field of Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to printable, removable adhesive-fastened articles having a micro-structured surface on their nonadhesive side, which are useful as a pad over which hand-held pointing devices may traverse.

2. Background Art

[0002] Many computers for use in the home or office are equipped with a hand-held pointing device, commonly referred to as a "mouse" because of their appearance. The mouse controls a pointer or cursor on the computer screen. A typical mouse has a rubber or rubber-coated "track ball" which contacts a surface, such as a desk top. Smooth and textured metallic track balls are also known. The track ball rolls within a socket within the mouse body. The mouse translates the movement of the track ball, in cooperation with the necessary computer hardware and software, into signals that tell the computer how to move the pointer.

[0003] Mice of the type previously described are generally referred to as mechanical mice. Other types of mice convert the movement of the track ball to an optical signal which is then converted into corresponding electrical signal (optomechanical mice).

[0004] A mouse will typically have one or more mouse buttons accessible to the user which the user may depress. In some cases, mouse buttons may be depressed simultaneously with the movement of the mouse across the surface, a procedure commonly known as "dragging." Dragging lets the user select a portion of the screen or move objects around the screen. In some mice of the type described, moving the mouse slowly results in small movements of the pointer, while moving the mouse faster results larger pointer movements.

[0005] In all of the above-mentioned mouse movements, both the mouse-to-pointer movement relationship and comfort are important to the user. It is frequently desired to cover large distances on the screen with minimum mouse movement, while retaining precise pointer control when the pointer approaches the desired object. It is also preferable to move the mouse with as much comfort to the user's hand and wrist as possible, avoiding step-like movements as might accompany the hand traversing a raised edge of the desk, or jerky movements across the desk made possible by dust, dirt, oil or food particles on the desk.

[0006] It is common for human users of interactive computers employing a mouse, particularly in office and home settings, to place the computer on decorative wooden or other furniture which may be subject to

scratches and dents by mouse movements. If the furniture is wood, oils or other slippery materials may be present in furniture polish. These materials, food grease and food particles, dust, dirt, and the like, may accumulate on such surfaces and come between the mouse and the surface thus rendering the mouse movement on the pad, and the cursor movement, less effective than desired. As such, most users would rather not have the mouse traverse the surface of the desk per se, but commonly employ a "mouse pad" to both protect the surface and retain precision pointer movements. One popular mouse pad comprises a thin woven or nonwoven surface over which the mouse traverses, and the nonwoven or woven material may have logos, advertisements, or other graphic symbols printed thereon. Adhered to one side of the woven or nonwoven material opposite the side the mouse traverses is typically a flexible foam which is perhaps 0.125 to 0.5 inch (0.32 to 1.27 cm) thick. This foam backing may have a plurality of rubbery, knobby protuberances on its bottom surface (away from the mouse traversing surface) which provide frictional non-slip contact with the desk or other surface.

[0007] Home and office computer users also frequently desire to personalize their work stations. Mouse pads are available having means for changing graphic designs within an envelope created between the mouse-traversing surface layer of the pad and a base layer. The base layer is typically an open cell neoprene sponge rubber or other resilient layer to isolate the mouse traversing surface of the pad from unevenness in the desk upon which the mouse pad is placed. Unfortunately, the foam pads tend to present an uncomfortable step which the user's hand must traverse, at times presenting the user's wrist with an uncomfortable movement. Mouse pads of this type thus sacrifice some user comfort for precision in locating the cursor on the computer screen.

[0008] It would be an advancement in the mouse pad art to provide a pad which is more comfortable to the user than those having a thick backing, and which may be changeably customized or personalized to alternatively display family photos, important computer commands, cartoons, and the like on the pad. It would also be advantageous if the pad could easily be temporarily immobilized on the desk or other surface, then removed and moved to another surface, without damage to the surface and without leaving a residue on the surface. It also would be desirable to have a mouse pad having a uniform texture with good aggressive grab to the track ball providing a smooth, uniform, and predictable movement to the pointer on the screen, but not abrasive to the user's hand, while being possible of manufacture from almost any plastic material such as urethane or polyethylene.

Summary of Invention

[0009] In accordance with the present invention, repo-

sitionable articles having a microstructured surface are presented which are useful as a repositionable control surface for a personal computer pointing device (including a mouse or data pen). The articles of the invention may also serve as repositionable drink coasters and airline tray covers. The inventive articles can be adhered either permanently or temporarily to a surface, and can be repeatedly attached and removed from a surface. The articles may be customized with artwork, either by printing on the obverse or through a lamination process.

[0010] The articles of the invention have a control surface which is soft to the human touch, the control surface defined by an array of a plurality of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions. The raised regions are pyramidal. The phrase "an array of a plurality of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions" is meant to distinguish over articles, such as paper, which have a smooth surface but microscopically have a textured surface.

[0011] Articles of the invention are especially useful as repositionable mouse pads due to excellent mouse tracking ball contact with the control surface. As the control layer may be formulated to contain water and oil repellent and soil resistant additives (or the control surface coated with same), the control surface will not get dirty from finger tip oils. The control layer is non-porous, will not shed lint and can be cleaned easily. Do to these properties, the articles of the invention advantageously keep the track ball cleaner for extended time periods.

[0012] One embodiment represents the repositionable article according to claim 1.

[0013] Preferred articles of the invention are those wherein the removable and rebondable adhesive layer comprises an adhesive which is permanently bonded to the back surface of the control layer but remains rebondable to a surface such as a desk top and the like. Also preferred are control layers which are modified to include optional antistatic agents, water, oil and soil resistant additives and/or coatings, pigments and/or dyes, and the like, and those control layers which have printed information on the obverse. Optionally, the control surface may have these types of additives applied by the user as coatings from spray containers, as is commonly known.

[0014] As used herein the terms "removable and rebondable" and "repositionable", when referring to an adhesive layer, are interchangeable terms, and mean that the adhesive permits repeated cycles in which materials are alternatively bonded thereto and removed therefrom, while the adhesive is permanently retained on the back surface of the control layer. One suitable repositionable adhesive is the adhesive system described in the portion of assignee's U.S. Pat. No. 3,857,731 extending from column 2, line 1 through column 10, line 47, which portion is incorporated by reference herein. This adhesive system comprises a binder material having embedded therein and protruding from the exposed surface thereof, elastomeric, inherently tacky, acrylate

copolymer microspheres. This adhesive system is further described herein. Adhesives exhibiting a peel adhesion ranging from about 2 to about 25 ounces per inch of width (about 22 to about 275 grams per cm of width) in a standard peel adhesion test are preferred.

[0015] Preferred are those articles of the aforementioned embodiment in which the substrate layer is selected from the group consisting of plastic and paper, and the second adhesive layer is a permanent adhesive. The substrate layer may also be a foamed material, such as foamed neoprene, but this is not particularly preferred. The control surface consists of a uniform array of a plurality of pyramids each having a height ranging from about 0.001 inch to about 0.040 inch (about 2.54×10^{-3} to about 0.1 cm). A graphic design may be adhered between the substrate layer and the second adhesive, or the design may be printed on the back surface of the control layer.

[0016] The articles of the first and second embodiments optionally include a release liner material removably attached to the rebondable adhesive.

[0017] Another embodiment of the invention is a kit adapted to be manipulated by the user to form a repositionable article having a microstructured surface. A first kit embodiment comprises:

a) a first sheet member consisting of:

- 1) a first release liner material having first and second surfaces;
- 2) a first adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the first adhesive layer removably adhered to the first surface of the first release liner material; and
- 3) a control layer having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface of the control layer adhered permanently to the first surface of the first adhesive layer, the control surface defined by an array of a plurality of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions; according to claim 10 and

b) a second sheet material consisting of:

- 1) a second release liner material having first and second surfaces;
- 2) a removable and rebondable second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the second release liner material; and
- 3) a substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the substrate layer adhered to the first surface of the second adhesive layer, and the first surface of the substrate layer adapted to be permanently adhered to the first surface of the first adhesive layer when the first release material is removed from

the first adhesive layer and the first adhesive layer and substrate layer are joined.

[0018] Preferred are those kits comprising a graphic layer, the graphic layer positioned either between the first adhesive layer and the control layer (or printed on the back surface of the control layer), or adhered to the second surface of the substrate layer.

[0019] Another kit embodiment, adapted to be manipulated by the user into a repositionable article having microstructured surface represents the kit according to claim 14.

a) a first sheet material having a control surface and a back surface, the control surface defined by an array of a plurality of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions; and
b) a second sheet material comprising:

- 1) a first release material having first and second surfaces;
- 2) a removable and rebondable adhesive layer adapted to be attached to the back surface of the control layer, the adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the adhesive layer removably adhered to the first surface of the first release material; and
- 3) a second release material having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second release material removably adhered to the first surface of the adhesive layer.

[0020] Yet another embodiment of the invention is a repositionable article having a microstructured surface comprising:

- a) a removable and rebondable first adhesive layer having first and second surfaces;
- b) a first substrate material having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the first substrate material adhered to the first surface of the first adhesive layer;
- c) a second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the first substrate layer;
- d) a second substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second substrate layer adhered to the first surface of the second adhesive layer;
- e) a third adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the third adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the second substrate material; and
- f) a control layer having a control surface and back surface, the back surface of the control layer adhered to the first surface of the third adhesive layer, the control surface defined by an array of a plurality

of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions.

[0021] Preferred are those articles within this embodiment wherein a graphics layer is positioned between the second substrate layer and the third adhesive layer.

[0022] Still another embodiment of the invention is a repositionable article having a microstructured surface comprising:

- a) a removable and rebondable first adhesive layer having first and second surfaces;
- b) a substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the substrate layer adhered to the first surface of the first adhesive layer;
- c) a second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the substrate layer;
- d) a control layer having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface of the control layer adhered to the first surface of the second adhesive layer, the control surface defined by an array of a plurality of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions.

[0023] Another kit of the invention includes first and second sheet-like articles, the kit comprising:

a) the first sheet-like article consisting of:

- 1) a first release material having first and second surfaces;
- 2) a first adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the first adhesive layer removably adhered to the first surface of the first release layer; and
- 3) a control layer having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface adhered to the first surface of the first adhesive layer, the control layer defined as above; and

b) said second sheet-like article consisting of:

- 1) a second release material having first and second surfaces;
- 2) a removable and rebondable second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer removably adhered to the first surface of the second release material;
- 3) a first substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the first substrate layer adhered to the first surface of the second adhesive layer;
- 4) a third adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of a third adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the first

substrate layer; and

5) a second substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second substrate layer adhered to the first surface of the third adhesive layer.

[0024] An alternative kit including first and second sheet-like articles comprises,

a) a first sheet-like article consisting of a control layer having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface adapted to be contacted with a second sheet-like article, the control surface defined as above; and

b) a second sheet-like material consisting of:

1) a first release material having first and second surfaces;

2) a removable and rebondable first adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the first adhesive layer removably adhered to the first surface of the first release material;

3) a substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the substrate layer adhered to the first surface of the first adhesive layer;

4) a second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the substrate layer; and

5) a second release material having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second release material removably adhered to the first surface of the second adhesive layer, the second release material and the first release material adapted to be removed from the second sheet-like article, and the first surface of the second adhesive layer adapted to be adhered to the second surface of the control layer.

[0025] The articles of the invention may be:

(a) packaged flat with overlapping articles, wherein the adhesive is covered with a release liner;

(b) packaged flat with overlapping articles, adhesive un-linered;

(c) rolled onto itself such that the adhesive is not exposed but is covered up by subsequent layers.

(d) folded onto itself, adhesive against adhesive, such that the rebondable adhesive remains clean until used.

[0026] Thus, the invention further includes a support article from which repositionable articles can be removed, the support article comprising a plurality of repositionable articles each having a microstructured surface, each repositionable article comprising:

a) a removable and rebondable adhesive layer having first and second surfaces;

b) a control layer having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface of the adhesive layer adhered to the back surface of the control layer, the control surface defined by an array of a plurality of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions,

the repositionable articles being relatively disposed so that at least a portion of the control surface contacts at least a portion of the first surface of the adhesive layer of an underlying repositionable article. Preferred support articles are those wherein the repositionable articles are disposed in the form of a stack or roll of repositionable articles, and support articles upon which are mounted one or more of the repositionable articles.

[0027] A final embodiment comprises a repositionable article as claimed according to claim 1 having a microstructured surface comprising:

a) a non-adhesive, high friction layer having first and second surfaces;

b) a control layer having a control surface and a back surface, the second surface of the non-adhesive, high friction layer adhered to the back surface of the control layer, the control surface defined by an array of a plurality of precisely shaped raised regions and a plurality of recessed regions.

[0028] It will be understood that the repositionable adhesive in all other embodiments may be substituted with the non-adhesive, high friction materials.

[0029] There are many advantages of the articles and kits of the present invention when used as mouse pads when compared with the conventional foam-backed mouse pads. Preferably, the articles of the invention are constructed such that the total thickness (i.e. the thickness measured from the desk or table surface to the point of the article most distal from the desk surface) is less than 1/4 inch (6.35 mm), preferably less than 1/16 inch (about 1.6 mm), but in all cases more than 0.05 mm. In survey tests of users comparing the inventive articles with those of the type having 1/4 inch or greater thick foam backing, it was found that thicknesses within these ranges endow the inventive articles with significant ergonomic advantage. The inventive article's low height (i.e. low thickness value) still allows the area of the desk or other surface covered by the article (sometimes referred to as the "mouse area") to be used as a normal desk surface. Papers can easily be slid over it, as can a keyboard. The control layer film is preferably transparent. Graphic artwork can be laminated to the obverse yet remain clear and legible, and the size and shape of the inventive articles can be easily customized using scissors.

[0030] The inventive articles are of suitable flexibility

such that they will lay flat on a surface⁸ even after being flexed. The inventive articles are preferably sufficiently resilient so that the article bends as it is peeled off a desk or other surface, but which is supple so that the article flattens out easily upon reattaching to the desk. Typically, articles of the invention are sufficiently flexible to be wound about themselves on a 1 inch (2.54 cm) diameter mandrel.

[0031] The control surface may have a border or other defined portion which is not microstructured. For example, the peripheral border of the control surface may be stippled such that it is similar to the surface obtained by plasma coating. Alternatively, a portion or all of the control surface may be created through a knurling process yielding less uniform results.

[0032] The control layer of the articles of the invention has a control surface defined by an array of precisely shaped protrusions, which are pyramids or pyramidal frustums, that are specially configured to provide desired traction control properties. Although uniform, non-random arrays are preferred in some instances, random arrays may be preferred in other end uses.

[0033] Adapted to be repositionably secured to the surface of a desk or other apparatus, the articles of the invention comprise at least one of (1) a repositionable adhesive layer on the surface of the article proximal to the desk surface, or (2) a high-friction surface which replaces the repositionable adhesive, such as a coating of rubber (neoprene, chloroprene, and the like), or (3) the control layer can be adhered to a desk or other surface through the use of surface tension effects, through a vacuum formed by air exclusion or through a highly plasticized control layer or substrate layer that "wets out" the desk surface, in much the same fashion as non-adhesive vinyl decals are adhered to a surface. Useful highly plasticized, non-adhesive layers may comprise a plasticized rubber such as neoprene. It is most preferred to utilize a repositionable adhesive, such as that known under the trade designation "Post-It", which is described in the previously mentioned '731 patent.

[0034] Alternatively, the control layer may have applied on its back surface a "slidable" pressure-sensitive adhesive such as those described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,141,790, incorporated by reference herein. This allows the inventive articles to be moved into place and then adhered by hand pressure. The adhesives described in the '790 patent comprise a plurality of spaced clumps of particles substantially uniformly distributed over and protruding from one face of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, the tips of the clumps of particles being substantially free from the pressure-sensitive adhesive. Preferably, the individual particles are smaller than the thickness of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, and substantially every clump extends to a height above the surface of the pressure sensitive adhesive layer that exceeds the average size of the particles. The particles are preferably microspheres of adhesive such as those described in U.S. Pat. No. 3,691,140, further

described herein below.

[0035] The control surface of the invention may be tailored (by proper combination of microstructure, composition and transparency) so that the array of precisely shaped protrusions and recesses defining the control surface creates an optical effect, such as Moire patterning or "image shifting." That is, the image changes with viewing angle.

[0036] FIG. 1 is an illustrative embodiment of the control surface of the mouse pad of the invention. A pattern of three intersecting sets of parallel v-shaped grooves yields the structured control surface. The apexes of each set of grooves are identified as a, b, and c. The base of each individual protrusion is defined by one groove of each of the three sets. As mentioned above, the three sides of the base of each three-sided pyramid are typically relatively equal in length. This can be controlled by selection of the intersection angles between the three sets of grooves, i.e., alpha, beta, and gamma. Each side of the base of a pyramidal protrusion and the peak of that protrusion defines a plane, referred to herein as a face of the protrusion. The faces of each protrusion are preferably relatively equal in area.

[0037] The direction parallel to each set of grooves is referred to herein as a major axis of the control surface. Thus, the article illustrated in FIG. 1 has three major axes. The maximum grip or friction provided by control surfaces of this type is obtained in a direction perpendicular to one of the major axes of the control surface. In some instances, articles of the invention are characterized as having directional gripping characteristics.

[0038] It is typically preferred, but not essential, that the peak of the pyramid be centered over the geometric center of the base of the pyramid. In some instances, if the protrusions of a control layer have peaks which are "horizontally offset" from their respective bases, the sheeting may have directional gripping characteristics as a result. Articles having directional gripping characteristics would likely be considered desirable in many envisioned applications.

[0039] With respect to any embodiment of the invention, the protrusions are typically between about 3 mils and about 21 mils (75 and 525 micrometers), preferably between about 5 mils and 9 mils (125 and 225 micrometers), and most preferably about 7 mils (175 micrometers), in height. In some embodiments, the control layer can comprise protrusions up to about 30 mils (750 micrometers) in height, although such control layers may tend to be abrasive to one's skin. As used herein and illustrated in FIG. 2a, the height h of a protrusion refers to the length of the shortest possible line segment extending from the protrusion's peak P to its base. The protrusion's peak is defined to be the highest point of the protrusion, i.e., the point of the protrusion located furthest from the plane in which the base of the protrusion lies.

[0040] The shape of a protrusion is characterized by its aspect ratio, which is defined as the ratio of the pro-

trusion's height h to its equivalent base diameter D_{eq} . The equivalent base diameter D_{eq} is defined as the diameter of a hypothetical circle having the same area as the base. It is believed that the invention can be practiced satisfactorily if the protrusions have an aspect ratio which is from about 0.1 to about 5. Most preferably, the aspect ratio for pyramidal protrusions is from about 0.3 to about 0.6.

[0041] The control layer typically comprises a polymeric film selected from, for example, the group consisting of polyvinyls, polyurethanes, polyesters, e.g., polyethylene terephthalate, polyacrylics, polycarbonates, polyolefins, and mixtures thereof. Polyurethanes are presently preferred because they typically yield control surfaces which offer an optimum combination of high toughness and durability coupled with high softness and flexibility. Polyacrylics typically yield articles that are relatively rigid.

[0042] The control layer, excluding the height of the protrusions, is typically between about 2 mils and about 100 mils (50 and 2,500 micrometers) thick, and most preferably between about 4 mils and about 20 mils (100 and 500 micrometers) thick.

[0043] One embodiment of the invention (embodiment 10) comprises a removable and rebondable adhesive layer to which at least one major surface is adhered to a plastic layer, which in turn has another adhesive layer adhered over the plastic layer.

[0044] A suitable removable and rebondable adhesive is available from Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company, St. Paul, Minnesota ("3M") under the trade designation "Post-It", which comprises inherently tacky elastomeric acrylate copolymer microspheres as disclosed in claimed in commonly assigned U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,691,140, and 3,857,731. The '140 patent teaches that the copolymer microspheres disperse in various solvents to form suspensions which can be utilized in aerosol spray applications. When a substrate is sprayed on such suspensions and the solvent thereafter evaporated, there results a continuous coating of mildly tacky pressure-sensitive adhesive. Paper and the like can be applied to the surface of the coating, removed, repositioned, and rebonded. It had been found, however, that during removal of an adhered object, some of the particular adhesive spheres would transfer to the surface of the object, reducing the number of spheres on the originally coated substrate. Therefore, a substrate having the adhesive sprayed thereon would soon lose its tacky nature, and after repeated applications and removals, subsequent objects would eventually not adhere thereto. The invention of the '731 patent solved this problem by providing individual sockets on a substrate surface with a microspherical adhesive to be retained in, thereby reducing or eliminating transfer of the microspherical adhesive upon removal of an object adhered thereto. The individual sockets are conveniently provided by a binder material bonded to the substrate surface.

[0045] In accordance with the present invention, the

adhesive layer preferably comprises a binder material having embedded therein and protruding from the exposed surface thereof, elastomeric, inherently tacky, acrylate copolymer microspheres of the type disclosed and claimed in the '140 patent. These microspheres consist essentially of about 90 to 99.5 percent by weight of at least one acyl acrylate ester and about 10 to about 0.5 weight percent of at least one monomer selected from the group consisting of substantially oil-insoluble, water-soluble, ionic monomers and maleic anhydride. The normally tacky and elastomeric copolymer spheres are small in size, having diameters in the range of about 1 to 250 micrometers, with the majority of the spheres falling in the range of about 5 to about 150 micrometers.

[0046] The binder compound utilized to anchor the spheres to prevent the removal from the adhesive surface should be compatible with the microspheres and the table or desktop 5 illustrated in FIG. 1, i.e., it should neither chemically attack the polymer spheres or tabletop 5 nor act as a solvent for them. In other words, the anchoring binder should be inert toward the microspheres and the surface to which the article of the invention is applied. The film-forming resins having a high degree of adhesion for the acrylate copolymer spheres generally are effective to anchor the spheres to a substrate. Relatively hard resins such as epoxies and nitrocellulose and relatively soft resins such as acrylates and vinyl ethers are examples of suitable film-forming anchoring binder resins.

[0047] As explained in the '731 patent, where necessary, conventional primers can be conveniently utilized between the adhesive layer and the plastic layer. The art of priming substrates to allow wetting or bonding of a variety of coatings is well known, such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,328,066 and 2,926,105, which disclose primers for cellophane plastic materials, U.S. Pat. No. 2,927,868, which discloses primers for acetate films, and U.S. Pat. No. 2,897,960 which discloses primers for polyvinylchloride films.

[0048] Application of the adhesive layer to the plastic layer can be undertaken in any conventional manner. For example, the mixture may be coated to a desired thickness, using, for example, a knife, a wire-wound bar or a rotogravure roll. Alternatively, the mixture may be sprayed onto the plastic layer.

[0049] It will be appreciated that one advantage of the articles of the invention is that the articles may be made with an adhesive present only around the perimeter of the article. This would allow the placement of photographs or other preprinted sheets to be placed under the control layer.

[0050] Of course it is within the invention that the articles of the invention may be adhered "permanently" to the desk or tabletop. In these embodiments, the adhesive may be any of those commercially available adhesives described in assignees copending patent application Serial No. 07/929,685, which was cross-referenced above. Suitable permanent adhesives are also dis-

cussed below.

[0051] The plastic sheet may actually be plastic or paper. When it is paper, the paper and the adhesive layers comprise a single product such as that known under the trade designation "3M Laser Label" sheets, number 7701, which are available in 8.5 by 11 inch sheets suitable for use with a personal computer printer such as the printers known under the trade designations "HP Deskjet 500C" and "HP LaserJet IIIp", both available from Hewlett Packard Corporation, Palo Alto, California. Laser label sheets having a model number 7701 comprise a cellulose paper layer having an adhesive layer thereon, the adhesive layer in turn having a release liner.

[0052] According to embodiment 10 the adhesive layer is a permanent adhesive, such as those described above applicable for use for the adhesive layer. Adhesive for use in the adhesive layer should be inert to the control layer and the plastic layer, i.e., the adhesive should not chemically attack the materials of the aforementioned layers.

[0053] The control layer has a control surface which is a microstructured surface consisting of tiny pyramids [approx. 0.01 to 0.014 inches (about 2.54×10^{-3} to about 3.56×10^{-2} cm) in height]. This microstructured surface gives a precise functional control surface which is uniform in texture which affords good aggressive grab to a mouse tracking ball, but which is preferably not abrasive to the user's hand. A control surface preferably provides a smooth uniform and predictable movement to the pointer or cursor on the computer screen. The plastic material which comprises the control layer is preferably transparent and colorless allowing any printing which appears on the plastic surface (such as represented by an ink layer) to be seen.

Alternatively, pigments and/or dyes may be incorporated into the control layer to create a marbled appearance, or a colored opaque appearance.

[0054] The ink is preferably any ink or pigment which may be printed by typical personal computer printers, and which will adhere to the paper or film layer. The ink layer may either be positioned at the entire cross-section of the article or there may be areas devoid of ink as when words or other characters are printed on the plastic layer.

[0055] Embodiment 40 consists simply of an adhesive (preferably removable and rebondable) adhered to bottom surface of the control layer.

[0056] For example, embodiment 70 illustrates a kit embodiment and is represented by two sheet-like materials, the first sheet-like material comprised of an adhesive layer having a release liner attached thereto, the adhesive in turn attached to the control layer. A second sheet-like material of the kit comprises an adhesive layer (preferably a rebondable adhesive) having a release liner, the adhesive layer attached to paper or plastic film layer. In embodiment 70, the sheet-like portion consisting of three layers is available under the trade designation "3M Laser Label" sheets, model no. 7701, which are

the 8.5 by 11 inch sheets previously mentioned. The adhesive layer is typically and preferably a permanent adhesive known under the trade designation "3M Adhesive Transfer Tape 950" from 3M, which is an acrylate-based permanent adhesive.

[0057] Kit embodiments 70' and 70" are similar to kit embodiment 70 except for the provision of the ink layers as previously mentioned.

[0058] Some of the kits are especially useful for users having personal computers and printers. These kits allow the user to print on the surface by inserting laser label sheets such as those described above into the paper holder of a printer. Essentially any information that can be typed or graphically shown on the computer screen can be printed on the plastic layer such as important, frequently called telephone numbers, advertising logos, designs, and the like.

[0059] Embodiment 80 illustrated is another two-piece kit. However, the first sheet member of the kit is simply a control layer having a control surface, while the second sheet member consists of an adhesive layer (preferably a repositionable adhesive) having on its major surfaces release liners.

[0060] Release lining materials can be of any material which does not adhere permanently to the adhesive. Suitable release materials include paper or polyesters which have been treated with a non-adhering substance such as a neat silicone or a fluorocarbon. Alternatively, the release material may be a suspension emulsion, or dispersion of a silicone- or a fluorocarbon-based substance applied directly to the adhesive layer by any method including spraying. Silicone-treated paper is commercially available from James River Corporation (Parchment, Michigan) and a silicone-based emulsion for spray applications is commercially available from Paper-chem Labs (Rockhill, North Carolina).

[0061] Suitable materials for the plastic layer include those useful in forming the control layer, including polyester, polyvinyl chloride, polystyrene, polypropylene, polyethylene, polybutylene, copolymers of polyethylene and vinyl acetate, cellulose di- and triacetate, and ethyl cellulose. One useful polyester film commercially available is that known under the trade designation "Mylar" from E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Company, Wilmington, Delaware.

[0062] As stated previously, it is possible to repositionably adhere the control layer in all embodiments directly onto the desk or other surface by use of a highly plasticized control layer. Suitable plasticizers for this purpose include both so-called "internal" and "external" plasticizers, the former meaning a copolymer of a monomer of low T_g , the latter meaning a compound not chemically bound to the polymer. Polyvinyl chloride is a preferred polymer for use in plastic layers since it is compatible with a variety of plasticizers and because the plasticized polymer remains quite stable physically and chemically for long periods of time. Cost, odor and other factors may be important in selecting the plasticizer.

Suitable external plasticizers for polyvinyl chloride include tritolyl phosphate, dinonyl phthalate, dioctyl sebacate, dioctyl phthalate, and di-2-ethylhexyl phthalate. Dimethyl phthalate is typically used to plasticize cellulose acetate. External plasticizers may be incorporated into the polymer at a weight percentage ranging from 1 to about 50 weight percent.

[0063] Constructions 90, 100, 110 and 120, are alternatives to embodiments of 10, 10, 70, and 80, respectively. The adhesive layer of embodiments 10, 70 and 80 is replaced by a three layer structure consisting of an adhesive layer which adheres a plastic or paper layer to another plastic or paper layer and another adhesive layer, which as above described may either be a permanent adhesive or a repositionable adhesive, preferably the latter.

[0064] Embodiment 130 differs by having a different control surface formed in the control layer. The control surface is commonly referred to as a continuous, uniform random texture, and is described generally in U.S. Pat. No. 4,799,054. The '054 patent describes this surface as a matte surface texture comprised of a great number of plateau-like protrusions scattered at random on the surface and each having a top at the same level. The spaces between the protrusions must be small compared to the surface area of the tracking ball which contacts the control surface. A suitable material for use as this surface is a polyvinyl chloride, available from Goss Plastics Film Corporation of Los Angeles, California, under the trade designation "Goss 48.4". This product is scratch-resistant and is available in thickness ranging from about 10 to 20 mils (2.54×10^{-2} to 5.08×10^{-2} cm).

[0065] Other materials which may be used for the control layer include those mentioned in the '054 patent including a textured polycarbonate material available from General Electric Company of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, under the trademark "Lexan", or from any of Mobil Chemical Corporation, Plastics Division, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Rohm and Haas Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Humko Sheffield Chemical of Memphis, Tennessee. Polystyrene, polyester, or acetate films may also be used as well as urethane as previously discussed.

[0066] The control layer preferably has hardness ranging from about 70 durometer to about 140 durometer, measured on the Shore "A" durometer scale. Such measurements should be made using an apparatus substantially meeting the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard D 2240-68.

[0067] It may also be beneficial to provide the articles of the invention with antistatic properties. A simple wire attachment may be utilized for this purpose. Antistatic agents or conductivity enhancers may be applied to the surface of the finished article or incorporated into the bulk of the plastic polymer (when polymeric layers are employed). The main groups of useful and preferred antistatic agents include ionic compounds, such as qua-

ternary ammonium salts and amines and hydrophilic compounds such as polyglycols and ethylene oxide derivatives. These antistats increase the electrical conductivity of the material by increasing its surface ionic activity. Other useful but less preferred methods may be used, such as incorporation of small amounts of electrically conductive metallic staple fibers, or certain types of carbon black, into the polymer layer(s).

[0068] Antistatic agents applied by surface treatment may be applied to plastic polymer layers by dipping, wiping, or spraying a solution or dispersion of the antistat in water or other inexpensive, volatile solvent.

[0069] Internal antistatic agents are incorporated into the bulk of the polymer from where it gradually migrates to the surface. Preferred are those internal antistatic agents which are reasonably compatible with the polymer, diffuses through the polymer adequately, and has thermal stability suitable for the end use of the article. The antistatic agent also should not cause undesirable side effects on the article.

[0070] The type and amount of internal antistatic agent incorporated into a polymer layer depends greatly on the composition of the polymer. Nonionic ethoxylated compounds are preferred for polyvinyl chloride; N-alkyl diethanolamines are preferred for polyolefins; and quaternary ammonium compounds are preferred for polyurethanes. The amount of internal antistatic agent generally ranges from about 0.05 weight percent to about 5 weight percent, based on total weight of polymer and antistatic agent. A more comprehensive list of both external and internal antistatic agents and their selected use in various polymer systems is available in Kirk-Othmer, *Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology*, 3rd Edition, Vol. 3, pp. 149-183, John Wiley & Sons (New York, 1978).

[0071] The control layer may also have a water and oil repellant and soil resistant coating thereon (or added to the polymer melt composition of the control layer prior to formation of the control layer). Suitable coatings include those commonly employed in fabric and carpet treatment, such as various fluorinated compounds. The fluorinated compounds may be incorporated in most conventional plastics either by copolymerization of reactive fluorinated intermediates or by the inclusion of fluorinated compounds as additives.

[0072] Fluorinated intermediates can generally be represented by the formula R_f-X-Y , wherein R_f is a fluoroaliphatic group, X is a divalent linking group, typically a hydrocarbon, between the fluoroaliphatic group and a reactive functional group Y.

[0073] Typical examples of reactive intermediates useful in the present invention include alcohols, which can react with isocyanate groups in forming the preferred polyurethane control layers. Useful alcohols include $F(CF_2)_8-CH_2-CH_2OH$ and $F(CF_2)_8-SO_2-NR-CH_2-CH_2OH$, and others disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,264,484 (incorporated by reference herein). Vinyl-functional compounds, such as $F(CF_2)_8-CH_2-CH_2-O-C(O)-$

$\text{CH}=\text{CH}_2$, may be useful in acrylic films. Other useful functional groups on fluoromonomers include acrylates, epoxides, diols, diamines, diacids, and functional silanes. Other useful fluorinated compositions are the blends disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,560,487 and 4,681,790.

[0074] Reactive fluorinated intermediates, when incorporated either as comonomers in polymeric systems or as additives, influence the surface properties of the plastic control surface. A useful range, depending on the particular degree of repellency desired, is from about 5 to 70% by weight of a fluorinated monomer.

[0075] Alternatively, partially fluorinated, low molecular weight substances may be included as additives to conventional hydrocarbon polymers during melt extrusion. The fluorinated additives migrate to the surface at rates that depend generally on the melt viscosity of the bulk plastic. As little as 0.01 weight percent of a low molecular weight copolymer of perfluoroalkylethyl methacrylate and acrylamide (85/15) significantly lowers the surface tension of an acrylic polymer film. Similar effects are seen by using perfluorosulfonic acids in polycarbonates, and perfluoroalkylethyl stearates in high density polyethylene. Generally about 0.1 to 1.0% by weight of the fluorinated additive is employed.

[0076] Since proper operation of a personal computer mouse relies on the rotational movement of the tracking member maintaining a constant relationship with a linear movement of the mouse itself, it is important that the control surface be provided with some texture, as mouse track balls may themselves be provided with smooth surfaces. Selecting a material of proper texture for the control layer can, therefore, usually increase the frictional engagement between the track ball and the control surface. Also, the inclusion of a texture on control surface provides even better operation with a mouse having a track ball including a rubber-like outer surface. This frictional engagement facilitates maintaining a 1:1 relationship between the linear mouse movement and track ball rotation.

[0077] As alluded to in the discussion of application of graphic symbols to the articles of invention using inks applied to a substrate member it is also possible to apply graphic symbols such as by the application of ink, to the back side of control layer not having the control surface. In all embodiments of the invention, difficulties can thus be avoided that arise as to the information being worn off or interfering with the operation of track ball when the information is printed directly on control surface. Ink jet printers can be used to print directly onto the control surface, but this is not preferred.

[0078] Control surface is defined by an array (i.e., an orderly arrangement such as a regularly repeating pattern) of precisely shaped protrusions thereon. Protrusions may be discrete elements laminated to the control layer or may be integral parts of the control layer, i.e., the control layer may be structured in the form of protrusions.

[0079] Protrusions on the control surface comprise pyramidal protrusions, i.e., pyramids with polygonal bases or pyramidal frustums with polygonal bases. Each polygonal base is disposed on a first surface of control layer and is defined by a plurality of line segments which lie in or on the plane of the control layer.

[0080] The polygonal bases of the protrusions are preferably selected from the group consisting of triangular bases, quadrilateral bases, pentagonal bases, hexagonal bases, heptagonal bases, octagonal bases, nonagonal bases and decagonal bases. In a most preferred embodiment the protrusions are triangular pyramids, i.e., three-sided pyramids having triangular bases. The polygonal bases of the protrusions are typically immediately adjacent one another such that there is no land separating the polygonal bases.

[0081] The line segments defining the sides of the polygonal base of each pyramidal protrusion are preferably relatively equal in length, but need not be. By relatively equal, it is meant that the length of the shortest line segment is equal to at least about 50 percent of the length of the longest line segment. Most preferably, the line segments defining the sides of the polygonal base of each pyramidal protrusion are equal in length. Each line segment is typically between about 5 and about 75 mils (125 and 1,875 micrometers), but preferably is between about 5 and about 30 mils (125 and 750 micrometers), and most preferably between about 10 and about 20 mils (250 and 500 micrometers), in length.

[0082] As previously stated the sheeting of the invention can include optional release liners and optional permanent adhesive layers. Permanent adhesive layers typically comprise an adhesive selected to provide a strong bond to the substrate article to which the resultant sheeting is to be applied. For example, heat-activated adhesives, pressure-sensitive adhesives, and mixtures thereof can be used. An illustrative example of a useful adhesive is that known under the trade designation "3M Adhesive Transfer Tape 950" from Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company. Many suitable epoxy, urethane, and acrylic adhesives are commercially available.

[0083] In some instances, the protrusions of the control surface may be made of a first, relatively hard and highly durable material, and the control layer may be made of a relatively more flexible material. Further, the material of the protrusions can comprise an abrasive or other filler. Further, all or a portion of each protrusion can be filled with a fluid, e.g., a gas such as air or nitrogen. If a gas were used, the pressure of the gas within each protrusion would have to be selected to provide the protrusions with the desired amount of compressibility.

[0084] Properly constructed articles of the invention generally exhibit a combination of high durability and friction due to the coupling of hard protrusions (e.g., polycarbonate), which are typically substantially incompressible and non-collapsible, with a more conformable,

flexible material (e.g., polyurethane) that results in a more cushioned impact during use.

[0085] The control layer of some embodiments of articles of the invention can be made using techniques which are somewhat similar to those used to make cube-corner retroreflective sheetings. It will be understood, however, that the control layer is preferably transparent, and can be made in a variety of transparent colors if desired. For example, the control layer can be made such that it will retroreflect less than about 10 percent of a beam of electromagnetic radiation which is incident at any angle to the control surface, the electromagnetic radiation having any wavelength within the visible light or infrared radiation regions, i.e., wavelengths ranging from about 0.39 micrometers to about 1,000 micrometers. Thus, at least a portion of the control layer can have a structure similar to retroreflective sheetings, but need not be retroreflective. This means that the control layer can be made of less expensive materials because optical performance is not a concern. Further, the control layer need not necessarily be manufactured in as precise a manner as retroreflective sheetings since optical performance is not needed.

[0086] A control layer useful in the invention may be formed by cutting a series of v-shaped grooves into a solid sheeting, molding a sheeting with the desired precisely shaped protrusions thereon, or molding precisely shaped protrusions and then applying them to a desired backing sheet. Many of the techniques used for fabricating cube-corner retroreflective sheeting may be used to form the control layers useful in the invention, with the important advantage that the optical properties critical to retroreflective sheetings are not necessary for sheets of the invention. U.S. Patent No. 4,576,850 (Martens), discloses a process for replicating microstructured surfaces that may be used in making sheetings of the invention. U.S. Patent No. 3,689,346 (Rowland) also discloses a method comprising applying a hardenable molding material over a mold having a multiplicity of cube-corner formations therein.

[0087] Desired flexibility, elasticity, and conformability of the inventive article is dependent in part upon the desk or other surface to which it is to be applied. It is preferred that the repositionable article be somewhat elastic and conformable so as to give or compress under pressure of a track ball when the article is used as a mouse pad. During use, it is possible that the table or surface may be flexible, such as when the mouse pad of the invention is placed over a conventional "foam-backed" mouse pad. Accordingly, a mouse pad of the invention for use thereon should be flexible, as described above.

[0088] In general, an article of the invention useful as a mouse pad can be repositionably secured to any surface over which the mouse traverses.

[0089] Other modifications and uses of the articles of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art. The articles of the invention may be of use in

airplanes as covers for pull-down trays, or as coasters for drink containers. The control surface may have thereon a coating such that it will receive indicia, such as a 95/5 weight ratio coating of methyl methacrylate/N-vinyl pyrrolidone copolymer such as those coatings typically applied to the face of overhead transparencies. The article may be formed to contain a pocket such that photos or artwork can be inserted therein, or folding lines may be formed into the article such that it forms a flap wherein art or photos can be contained. These modifications and alterations of the invention are considered within the scope of the following claims.

Claims

1. A repositionable article having a microstructured surface comprising:
 - a) a removable and rebondable adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the adhesive layer effective for allowing repeated removal, repositioning and rebonding of the article to a structural surface; alternatively, a non adhesive high friction layer having a first and second surfaces;
 - b) a surface layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the substrate layer;
 - c) a second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the first surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the second surface of the substrate layer; and
 - d) a control layer constructed of a non-adhesive material and having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface adhered to the second surface of the second adhesive layer, the control surface defined by a uniform array of a plurality of pyramids having a height ranging from about 2.54×10^{-3} cm to about 0.1 cm.
2. Article in accordance with claim 1, wherein said substrate layer is selected from a group consisting of plastic and paper.
3. Article in accordance with claim 1, wherein said first adhesive layer comprises a binder material having embedded therein and protruding from an exposed surface thereof, elastomeric, inherently tacky, acrylate copolymer microspheres.
4. Article in accordance with claim 1, wherein said first adhesive layer comprises a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer comprising a plurality of spaced clumps of particles substantially uniformly distributed over and protruding from the first surface of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, the tips of the

clumps of particles being substantially free from the pressure-sensitive adhesive.

5. Article in accordance with claim 1, wherein said second adhesive layer is a permanent adhesive. 5
6. Article in accordance with claim 1, wherein said substrate layer is a foamed material.
7. Article in accordance with claim 1, wherein said control layer is transparent. 10
8. Article in accordance with claim 7, further comprising a graphic design positioned between the second surface of the substrate layer and the first surface of said second adhesive. 15
9. Article in accordance with claim 1, wherein said first adhesive layer has a peel adhesion ranging from about 22 to about 275 grams per cm. 20
10. A kit for use in producing a repositionable sheet member, the kit comprising:
 - a) a first sheet member consisting of: 25
 - 1) a first release liner material having first and second surfaces;
 - 2) a first adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the first adhesive layer removably adhered to the first surface of the first release liner material; and 30
 - 3) a control layer constructed of a non-adhesive material and having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface of the control layer adhered permanently to the first surface of the first adhesive layer, and the control surface defined by a uniform array of a plurality of pyramids having a height ranging from about 2.54×10^{-3} cm to about 0.1 cm, with the proviso that the said control surface has not a microscopically structured surface; and 40
 - b) a second sheet material consisting of: 45
 - 1) a second release liner material having first and second surfaces;
 - 2) a removable and rebondable second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the second release liner material; and 50
 - 3) a substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the adhesive layer effective for allowing repeated removal, repositioning and rebonding of the article to a structural 55

surface, the second surface of the substrate layer adhered to the first surface of the second adhesive layer, and the first surface of the substrate layer capable of being permanently adhered to the first surface of the first adhesive layer, when the first release material is removed from the first adhesive layer and the first adhesive layer and substrate layer are joined.

11. Kit in accordance with claim 10, wherein said second adhesive layer comprises a binder material having embedded therein and protruding from an exposed surface thereof, elastomeric, inherently tacky, acrylate copolymer microspheres.
12. Kit in accordance with claim 10, wherein said second adhesive layer comprises a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer comprising a plurality of spaced clumps of particles substantially uniformly distributed over and protruding from the first surface of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, the tips of the clumps of particles being substantially free from the pressure-sensitive adhesive.
13. Kit in accordance with claim 10, further comprising a graphic layer, the graphic layer positioned either between the first adhesive layer and the control layer, or adhered to the second surface of the substrate layer.
14. A kit including first and second sheet-like articles which comprises :
 - a) a first sheet-like article consisting of a control layer constructed of a non-adhesive material and having a control surface and a back surface, the back surface capable of being contacted with a second sheet-like article, the control surface defined by a plurality of pyramids having a height ranging from about 2.54×10^{-3} cm to about 0.1 cm which produce a surface which is non-adhesive; and
 - b) a second sheet-like material consisting of:
 - 1) a first release material having first and second surfaces;
 - 2) a removable and rebondable first adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the adhesive layer effective for allowing repeated removal, repositioning and rebonding of the article to a structural surface, the second surface of the first adhesive layer removably adhered to the first surface of the first release material;
 - 3) a substrate layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the substrate layer adhered to the first surface of

the first adhesive layer;

4) a second adhesive layer having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second adhesive layer adhered to the first surface of the substrate layer; and

5) a second release material having first and second surfaces, the second surface of the second release material removably adhered to the first surface of the second adhesive layer, the second release material and the first release material capable of being removed from the second sheet-like article, and the first surface of the second adhesive layer capable of being adhered to the second surface of the control layer.

15. Kit in accordance with claim 14, wherein said first adhesive layer comprises a binder material having embedded therein and protruding from an exposed surface thereof, elastomeric, inherently tacky, acrylate copolymer microspheres.

16. Kit in accordance with claim 14, wherein said first adhesive layer comprises a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer having a plurality of spaced clumps of particles substantially uniformly distributed over and protruding from the second surface of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, the tips of the clumps of particles being substantially free from the pressure-sensitive adhesive.

Patentansprüche

1. Repositionierbarer Artikel mit einer mikrostrukturierten Oberfläche, umfassend:

a) eine ablösbare und wiederaufklebbare Klebeschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die Klebeschicht ein wiederholtes Ablösen, Repositionieren und Wiederaufkleben des Artikels auf eine strukturelle Oberfläche ermöglicht; alternativ dazu eine nichtklebende Schicht mit hoher Reibung mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche;

b) eine Substratschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die zweite Oberfläche der ersten Klebeschicht auf der ersten Oberfläche der Substratschicht haftet;

c) eine zweite Klebeschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die erste Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht auf der zweiten Oberfläche der Substratschicht haftet; und

d) eine Steuerungsschicht, die aus einem nicht-

klebenden Material besteht und eine Steuerungsoberfläche und eine Rückseitenoberfläche aufweist, wobei die Rückseitenoberfläche auf der zweiten Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht haftet, wobei die Steuerungsoberfläche durch eine gleichmäßige Anordnung einer Vielzahl von Pyramiden mit einer Höhe im Bereich von etwa $2,54 \times 10^{-3}$ cm bis etwa 0,1 cm definiert ist.

2. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei die Substratschicht aus der Gruppe ausgewählt ist, die aus Kunststoff und Papier besteht.

3. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei die erste Klebeschicht ein Bindemittel umfasst, in dem elastomere, eigenklebrige Acrylat-Copolymer-Mikrokugeln eingebettet sind, die aus der exponierten Oberfläche herausragen.

4. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei die erste Klebeschicht eine Haftkleberschicht umfasst, die eine Vielzahl beabstandeter Klumpen von Teilchen umfasst, die im wesentlichen gleichmäßig über die erste Oberfläche der Haftkleberschicht verteilt sind und daraus herausragen, wobei die Spitzen der Klumpen von Teilchen im wesentlichen frei von Haftkleber sind.

5. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei die zweite Klebeschicht ein Permanentkleber ist.

6. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei die Substratschicht ein geschäumtes Material ist.

7. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei die Steuerungsschicht transparent ist.

8. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 7, der weiterhin ein graphisches Muster umfasst, das sich zwischen der zweiten Oberfläche der Substratschicht und der ersten Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht befindet.

9. Artikel gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei die erste Klebeschicht eine Schälfestigkeit im Bereich von etwa 22 bis etwa 275 g/cm hat.

10. Kit zur Verwendung bei der Herstellung eines repositionierbaren Folienelements, wobei der Kit folgendes umfasst:

a) ein erstes Folienelement, bestehend aus:

1) einem ersten abziehbaren Deckschichtmaterial mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche;

2) einer ersten Klebeschicht mit einer er-

sten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die zweite Oberfläche der ersten Klebeschicht ablösbar auf der ersten Oberfläche des ersten abziehbaren Deckschichtmaterials haftet; und

3) einer Steuerungsschicht, die aus einem nichtklebenden Material besteht und eine Steuerungsoberfläche und eine Rückseitenoberfläche aufweist, wobei die Rückseitenoberfläche der Steuerungsschicht permanent auf der ersten Oberfläche der ersten Klebeschicht haftet und die Steuerungsoberfläche durch eine gleichmäßige Anordnung einer Vielzahl von Pyramiden mit einer Höhe im Bereich von etwa $2,54 \times 10^{-3}$ cm bis etwa 0,1 cm definiert ist, mit der Maßgabe, dass die Steuerungsschicht keine mikroskopisch strukturierte Oberfläche aufweist; und

b) ein zweites Folienelement, bestehend aus:

1) einem zweiten abziehbaren Deckschichtmaterial mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche;

2) einer ablösbaren und wiederaufklebbaren zweiten Klebeschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die zweite Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht auf der ersten Oberfläche des zweiten abziehbaren Deckschichtmaterials haftet; und

3) einer Substratschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche,

wobei die Klebeschicht ein wiederholtes Ablösen, Repositionieren und Wiederaufkleben des Artikels auf eine strukturelle Oberfläche ermöglicht, wobei die zweite Oberfläche der Substratschicht auf der ersten Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht haftet und die erste Oberfläche der Substratschicht permanent auf die erste Oberfläche der ersten Klebeschicht geklebt werden kann, wenn das erste abziehbare Deckschichtmaterial von der ersten Klebeschicht entfernt wird und die erste Klebeschicht und die Substratschicht zusammengefügt werden.

11. Kit gemäß Anspruch 10, wobei die zweite Klebeschicht ein Bindemittel umfasst, in dem elastomere, eigenklebrige Acrylat-Copolymer-Mikrokugeln eingebettet sind, die aus der exponierten Oberfläche herausragen.

12. Kit gemäß Anspruch 10, wobei die zweite Klebeschicht eine Haftkleberschicht umfasst, die eine Vielzahl beabstandeter Klumpen von Teilchen umfasst, die im wesentlichen gleichmäßig über die erste Oberfläche der Haftkleberschicht verteilt sind und daraus herausragen, wobei die Spitzen der Klumpen von Teilchen im wesentlichen frei von Haftkleber sind.

13. Kit gemäß Anspruch 10, der weiterhin eine graphische Schicht umfasst, wobei sich die graphische Schicht entweder zwischen der ersten Klebeschicht und der Steuerungsschicht befindet oder auf der zweiten Oberfläche der Substratschicht haftet.

14. Kit, der einen ersten und einen zweiten folienartigen Artikel beinhaltet und folgendes umfasst:

a) einen ersten folienartigen Artikel, der aus einer Steuerungsschicht besteht, die aus einem nichtklebenden Material besteht und eine Steuerungsoberfläche und eine Rückseitenoberfläche aufweist, wobei die Rückseitenoberfläche mit dem zweiten folienartigen Artikel in Kontakt gebracht werden kann, wobei die Steuerungsoberfläche definiert ist durch eine Vielzahl von Pyramiden mit einer Höhe im Bereich von etwa $2,54 \times 10^{-3}$ cm bis etwa 0,1 cm, die eine nichtklebende Oberfläche erzeugen; und

b) einen zweiten folienartigen Artikel, der aus folgendem besteht:

1) einem ersten abziehbaren Material mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche;

2) einer ablösbaren und wiederaufklebbaren ersten Klebeschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die Klebeschicht ein wiederholtes Ablösen, Repositionieren und Wiederaufkleben des Artikels auf eine strukturelle Oberfläche ermöglicht, wobei die zweite Oberfläche der ersten Klebeschicht ablösbar auf der ersten Oberfläche des ersten abziehbaren Materials haftet;

3) einer Substratschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die zweite Oberfläche der Substratschicht auf der ersten Oberfläche der ersten Klebeschicht haftet;

4) einer zweiten Klebeschicht mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die zweite Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht auf der ersten Oberfläche der Sub-

stratschicht haftet; und

5) einem zweiten abziehbaren Material mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Oberfläche, wobei die zweite Oberfläche des zweiten abziehbaren Materials ablösbar auf der ersten Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht haftet, wobei das zweite abziehbare Material und das erste abziehbare Material von dem zweiten folienartigen Artikel entfernt werden können und die erste Oberfläche der zweiten Klebeschicht auf die zweite Oberfläche der Steuerungsschicht geklebt werden kann.

15. Kit gemäß Anspruch 14, wobei die erste Klebeschicht ein Bindemittel umfasst, in dem elastomere, eigenklebrige Acrylat-Copolymer-Mikrokugeln eingebettet sind, die aus der exponierten Oberfläche herausragen.
16. Kit gemäß Anspruch 14, wobei die erste Klebeschicht eine Haftkleberschicht umfasst, die eine Vielzahl beabstandeter Klumpen von Teilchen umfasst, die im wesentlichen gleichmäßig über die zweite Oberfläche der Haftkleberschicht verteilt sind und daraus herausragen, wobei die Spitzen der Klumpen von Teilchen im wesentlichen frei von Haftkleber sind.

Revendications

1. Article repositionnable ayant une surface microstructurée comprenant :
- a) une couche adhésive démontable et recollable ayant une première et une seconde surface, la couche adhésive efficace pour un enlèvement, un repositionnement et un recollage répété de l'article sur une surface structurée; en tant qu'alternative, une couche non adhésive à forte friction ayant une première et une seconde surface;
 - b) une couche de surface ayant une première et une seconde surface, la seconde surface de la seconde couche adhésive collée à la première surface de la couche de substrat;
 - c) une seconde couche adhésive ayant une première et une seconde surface, la première surface de la seconde couche adhésive collée à la seconde surface de la couche de substrat, et
 - d) une couche de contrôle construite d'un matériau non adhésif et ayant une surface de contrôle et une surface dorsale, la surface dorsale collée à la seconde surface de la seconde couche adhésive, la surface de contrôle est définie

par un réseau uniforme d'une multiplicité de pyramides ayant une hauteur située dans la gamme comprise entre environ $2,54 \times 10^{-3}$ cm à environ 0,1 cm.

2. Article selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite couche de substrat est choisie entre le plastique et le papier.
3. Article selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite première couche adhésive comprend un liant ayant des microsphères en copolymère d'acrylate, élastomériques, intrinsèquement collantes, qui sont enrobées dedans et dépassent d'une surface exposée de celle-ci.
4. Article selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite première couche adhésive comprend une couche d'adhésif sensible à la pression comprenant une multiplicité d'agglomérats espacés de particules répartis essentiellement uniformément sur et dépassant de la première surface de la couche d'adhésif sensible à la pression, les bouts des agglomérats de particules étant pratiquement complètement exempts d'adhésif sensible à la pression.
5. Article selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite seconde couche adhésive est un adhésif permanent.
6. Article selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite couche de substrat est un matériau moussé.
7. Article selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite couche de contrôle est transparente.
8. Article selon la revendication 7, comprenant en outre un dessin graphique positionné entre la seconde surface de la couche de substrat et la première surface dudit second adhésif.
9. Article selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite première couche adhésive a une adhérence en pelage située dans la gamme comprise entre environ 22 et environ 275 grammes par cm.
10. Nécessaire à utiliser pour produire un élément de feuille repositionnable, le nécessaire comprenant :
- a) un premier élément de feuille constitué :
 - 1) d'un premier matériau de film antiadhérent ayant une première et une seconde surface;
 - 2) d'une première couche adhésive ayant une première et une seconde surface, la seconde surface de la première couche adhésive collée de manière amovible sur

la première surface du premier matériau de film antiadhérent; et

3) d'une couche de contrôle construite avec un matériau non adhérent et ayant une surface de contrôle et une surface dorsale, la surface dorsale de la couche de contrôle collée de manière permanente à la première surface de la première couche adhésive, et la surface de contrôle est définie par un réseau uniforme d'une multiplicité de pyramides ayant une hauteur située dans la gamme comprise entre environ $2,54 \times 10^{-3}$ cm et environ 0,1 cm, à la condition que ladite surface de contrôle n'ait pas une surface structurée à l'échelle microscopique; et

b) un second élément de feuille constitué :

1) un second matériau de film antiadhérent ayant une première et une seconde surface;

2) une seconde couche adhésive démontable et recollable ayant une première et une seconde surface, la seconde surface de la seconde couche adhésive collée à la première surface du second matériau de film antiadhérent; et

3) Une couche de substrat ayant une première et une seconde surface, la couche adhésive efficace pour réaliser un enlèvement, un repositionnement et un recollage répété de l'article sur une surface structurée, la seconde surface de la couche de substrat collée sur la première surface de la seconde couche adhésive, et la première surface de la couche de substrat capable d'être collée de manière permanente à la première surface de la première couche adhésive lorsqu'on enlève le premier matériau de film antiadhérent de la première couche adhésive et qu'on réunit la première couche adhésive et la couche de substrat.

11. Nécessaire selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ladite seconde couche adhésive comprend un liant ayant incorporé et dépassant d'une surface exposée de celui-ci des microsphères en copolymère d'acrylate, élastomériques, intrinsèquement collantes.

12. Nécessaire selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ladite seconde couche adhésive comprend une couche d'adhésif sensible à la pression comprenant une multiplicité d'agglomérats espacés de particules répartis essentiellement uniformément sur et dépassant de la première surface de la couche

d'adhésif sensible à la pression, les bouts des agglomérats de particules étant pratiquement complètement exempts d'adhésif sensible à la pression.

13. Nécessaire selon la revendication 10, comprenant en outre une couche graphique, la couche graphique positionnée soit entre la première couche adhésive et la couche de contrôle, ou collée à la seconde surface de la couche de substrat.

14. Nécessaire comprenant des articles en forme de première et seconde feuille qui comprend :

a) un premier article en forme de feuille constitué d'une couche de contrôle construite avec un matériau non adhésif et ayant une surface de contrôle et une surface dorsale, la surface dorsale capable d'être mise en contact avec un second article en forme de feuille, la surface de contrôle définie par une multiplicité de pyramides ayant une hauteur située dans la gamme comprise entre environ $2,54 \times 10^{-3}$ cm et environ 0,1 cm qui produisent une surface qui est non adhésive; et

b) un second matériau en forme de feuille constitué :

1) d'un premier matériau ayant une première et une seconde surface;

2) d'une première couche adhésive démontable et recollable ayant une première et une seconde surface, la couche adhésive efficace pour réaliser un enlèvement, un repositionnement et un recollage répétés de l'article sur une surface structurée, la seconde surface de la première couche adhésive collée de manière adhésive à la première surface du premier matériau antiadhérent.

3) d'une couche de substrat ayant une première et une seconde surface, la seconde surface de la couche de substrat collée à la première surface de la première couche adhésive;

4) une seconde couche adhésive ayant une première et une seconde surface, la seconde surface de la seconde couche adhésive collée à la première surface de la couche de substrat, et

5) un second matériau antiadhérent ayant une première et une seconde surface, la seconde surface du second matériau antiadhérent collée de manière amovible à la première surface de la seconde couche adhésive, le second matériau antiadhérent et le premier matériau antiadhérent étant capables d'être retirés du second article en forme de feuille, et la première surface de

la seconde couche adhésive est capable d'être collée à la seconde surface de la couche de contrôle.

15. Nécessaire selon la revendication 14, dans lequel ladite première couche adhésive comprend un liant ayant des microsphères en copolymère d'acrylate, élastomériques, intrinsèquement collantes, qui sont enrobées dedans et dépassent d'une surface exposée de celle-ci. 5 10
16. Nécessaire selon la revendication 14, dans lequel ladite première couche adhésive comprend une couche d'adhésif sensible à la pression ayant une multiplicité d'agglomérats espacés de particules réparties essentiellement uniformément sur et dépassant de la seconde surface de la couche d'adhésif sensible à la pression, les bouts des agglomérats de particules étant pratiquement complètement exempts d'adhésif sensible à la pression. 15 20

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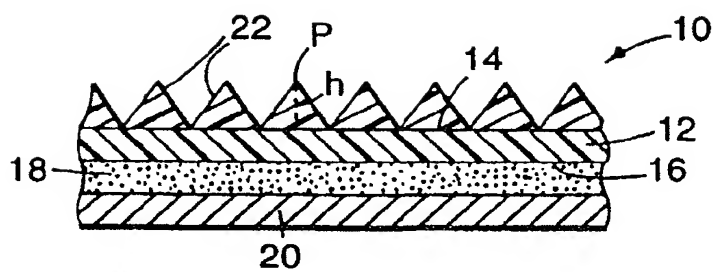


Fig. 1